

The Times-Dispatch

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MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 1913.

ARE WE UNMINDFUL?

Every loyal son of Richmond will blush to read the indictment which Professor Leslie Hall draws in a letter printed on this page. Contemplating with this distinguished Virginian the prospect of losing our last memorial of Edgar Allan Poe, will we not ask ourselves why we are so unmindful of this great genius and of a host of others whose names are almost forgotten among us?

Twenty-five years ago the memory of the ill-starred Poe was fresh in Richmond. On the brow of the Fifth Street hill, opposite the mansion of the venerable Dr. Hope stood the house of his foster-father and friend; on Broad Street, where a theatre now is, was the famous Old Swan Tavern, rich with memories of Poe, of Marshall, of Henry, of Mason and of Burr. Around the corner was the house where a quiet little woman would meet callers and point out the chair in which Poe used to sit when he came to call on her. Now Mrs. Weiss is dead, a row of stores stands on the site of the Allan house, and the Swan Tavern is gone forever. Worst of all, we plan to destroy the old building where was issued the magazine Poe and Thompson and Minor edited—the magazine that did more than all else to bring Southern writers before the nation. Surely we who permitted such things have wasted a heritage the most precious.

But we must tell Professor Hall that Poe is not the only great man whose Richmond associations have been allowed to pass. Why, it was not many days ago that a resident of Richmond expressed surprise to know that John Marshall was buried here, and asked us where Shockey Cemetery was! And even with his splendid old house known to all, it was with difficulty that public sentiment saved it when men feared it might obscure the facade of the new High School. Think of it—carving more for a high school of today than for the house in which was written the opinion in *Marbury vs. Madison*. Nor is this all. Good women who sought, on behalf of the Confederate Memorial Literary Society, to locate the building where the Secession Convention sat during the time it was not in the Capitol, had difficulty in finding people who remembered the site of the venerable Mechanics' Institute. And there are even now some who do not know that in a Clay Street residence—way up under the roof—Matthew Fontaine Maury made the first experiments with an electrical torpedo—some who do not know that in old Golden Hall Henry A. Wise and a few choice spirits gathered one April night to plan the first military movements of Virginia in her defense of her rights. One has but to read the old "Strangers' Guide," issued in 1862, to see how many of our famous landmarks have disappeared altogether.

Are we ever to be unmindful of this priceless heritage of history, and are we to let rebuilding strip us of every reminder that we live on sacred soil? God forbid, and God forbid that we should tear down the ancient home of the Literary Messenger. We cannot pay so great a price for that which men call progress!

THE FLY CONQUERED.

The Times-Dispatch does not want to be too optimistic, but we really begin to believe that here in Richmond we have learned how to conquer the fly and need only keep up the fight to gain a victory.

Undoubtedly the new stable ordinance and the investigations of Dr. Levy and Mr. Tuck are largely responsible for this. These men found that dirt floors checked their efforts to get clean stables, in that these floors afforded a lurking place for fly larvae after they were hatched. Thanks to the new ordinance of the Board of Health, which prohibited such floors in stables, our sanitary officers have been able to apply their knowledge and to make effectual the removal of stable waste.

Of scarcely less importance, in the judgment of The Times-Dispatch, has been the introduction of the new type of "glant" fly-trap, and the discovery by Dr. Levy of a bait which will attract flies by the million. To appreciate what these traps have done, one need but visit the Second Market and observe the marvelous decline in the number of flies there.

These look like sign-posts on the road to success. If they are, we can reach the goal by an early start next year, by the widespread use of the new traps and by general agreement to leave about the city as few breeding places for the pest as possible. And if we overcome the fly, we may rest assured that there will be a further decline in our number of cases of typhoid fever and a like decrease in the summer complaints of infants.

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